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## Biden's approval rating on the economy stagnates despite slowing inflation



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President Joe Biden speaks about the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 during a ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House in Washington, Sept. 13, 2022.

Associated Press



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## Lessons from our elders: Plants and fruits for medicinal use



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# Biden's approval rating on the economy stagnates despite slowing inflation

From Front

By JOSH BOAK and  
EMILY SWANSON

Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — President Joe Biden has devoted the past several weeks to promoting the positive impacts of his policies — but his efforts have yet to meaningfully register with the public.

Only 36% of U.S. adults approve of Biden's handling of the economy, slightly lower than the 42% who approve of his overall performance, according to the new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Both figures are close to where Biden's approval numbers have stood for about the past year and a half, including just two months ago. Signs of an improving economic outlook have done little to sway how people feel about the Democratic president as he gears up for a 2024 reelection campaign that could pit him against his predecessor and 2020 opponent, Republican Donald Trump.

Job growth has stayed solid with the unemployment rate at 3.5%, while the pace of inflation has slowed sharply over the past year to the annual rate of 3.2%. Both Biden and Trump have weaknesses as older candidates seeking a rematch. Trump, 77, faces a series of criminal indictments that include his possession of classified material and allegations that he tried to overturn the 2020 election, which has rallied support among Republicans while leaving him with substantial vulnerabilities in a potential general election contest.

Biden, 80, has yet to fully bring Democrats to his side as the lingering aftershocks of inflation still weigh on people's minds. Along with members of his cabinet and Vice President Kamala Harris, Biden has been speaking about the \$500 billion worth of new investments by private companies that he said came from incentives he signed into law.

Erica Basile, a teacher



President Joe Biden speaks on the anniversary of the Inflation Reduction Act during an event in the East Room of the White House, Wednesday, Aug. 16, 2023, in Washington.

Associated Press

who describes herself as a "staunch Democrat," said she feels the economy is "mediocre, but improving." "I do think in many ways they're working very hard at getting the economy back on track post-COVID," said Basile, who lives in Lynnwood, Washington.

Just 65% of Democrats approve of Biden's economic leadership, while 76% approve of how he's handling the job overall.

In follow-up interviews, some survey respondents felt torn between the desire to return to a sense of normalcy after Trump's presidency and the desire for even more sweeping policies to address climate change, health care costs and taxes.

"When Joe Biden was selected to be the nominee and eventually won, my feeling at the time was that he could be the most milquetoast and undramatic president to help the country cool down,"

said Steven Peters, 41, who works in information technology in White House, Tennessee. "Unfortunately, that's what he's been. I'm dissatisfied because I had hoped there would be more change."

Peters added, "He's really middle of the road when a lot of people would like to see more dramatic action." For GOP supporters, such as Merritt Rahn, 74, Biden has gone too far. Rahn said he is retired but also works at Home Depot and sees higher gasoline and food costs as making it harder for families to get by financially. The Jensen Beach, Florida, resident said Biden will further hurt the U.S. by moving energy sources away from oil and gas.

"It's a death to our society and economy," said Rahn, who added that he believes Biden "has no clue what's going on."

The poll also found that 55% of Democrats say they don't think Biden should

run again in 2024, though a large majority — 82% — say they would definitely or probably support him if he is the nominee. Overall, only 24% of Americans say they want Biden to run again. Among Democrats who approve of how Biden is handling the economy, 58% would like him to seek another term. Just 20% of those who disapprove of his performance on the issue want the incumbent president to run again.

Biden continues to struggle to appeal to younger Democrats, especially on the economy. Only 52% of Democrats under age 45 say they approve of his handling of the economy, compared with 77% of those older.

The president has used the term "Bidenomics" to try to encompass his ideas to lower costs for people on Medicare, shift toward electric vehicles and renewable energy, and build factories for advanced

computer chips and batteries. Yet some are still struggling to understand what the term means.

Asked about the definition of Bidenomics, Cory O'Brien, 39, said: "You know what, dude, I have no idea. Biden is a free market capitalist like most moderate Democrats are."

The age gap extends to Biden's reelection campaign: Just 34% of Democrats under 45 want him to run again, compared with 54% of those older than that. Still, about three-quarters of younger Democrats say they'll most likely support him if he's the nominee, though only 28% say they definitely will.

O'Brien, who works in education and lives in Massachusetts, said he expects the 2024 election to be "miserable" for voters because of the likely Biden and Trump rematch.

"I think it's going to be a miserable election cycle," he said. "We're going to see a lot of the same stuff that we saw in 2020."

Biden also faces renewed pressure related to investigations over his son Hunter's business dealings. The poll finds that a majority of Americans — 58% — have hardly any confidence in Biden to reduce corruption in government, though that's unchanged since January. Another 30% have some confidence and 10% have a great deal of confidence.

The poll shows that 23% of Americans say they have a great deal of confidence in Biden's ability to effectively manage the White House, 31% have some confidence and 45% have hardly any. Despite the fact that Biden has achieved several of his major policy goals, just 16% say they have high confidence in his ability to do that, while 38% say they have some confidence and 44% hardly any.

Few Americans say they think the national economy is doing well: 34% describe it as very or somewhat good. No more than about a third of Americans have called the economy good since 2021. □



# FEMA has paid out more than \$5.6 million to Maui survivors

By **KEN SWEET and MAE ANDERSON**

**The Associated Press**

**NEW YORK (AP)** — The Federal Emergency Management Agency said Friday it has approved more than \$5.6 million in assistance to nearly 2,000 households in Maui so far as the federal government tries to help survivors of the devastating wildfires.

The White House and FEMA approved a one-time payment of \$700 per household for needs like clothing, food, or transportation. The agency will also pay to put survivors up in hotels and motels and says it has paid out \$1.6 million in rental assistance as of Friday.

The amounts are expected to grow significantly. Estimates are that thousands of buildings were damaged or destroyed in the fire, which consumed much of historic community of Lahaina. In the wake of the Northern California wildfire in 2018, which decimated the city of Paradise, FEMA paid out \$238 million in assistance.

FEMA said Wednesday that it will open a disaster recovery center in Maui in order to better and more quickly facilitate the distribution of



**Hawaii Gov. Josh Green, center, points to damage as he speaks with Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator Deanne Criswell during a tour of wildfire damage, Saturday, Aug. 12, 2023, in Lahaina, Hawaii.**

aid. Survivors need to register with FEMA to be eligible for the payout and other assistance. Roughly 4,400 Hawaii fire survivors have applied for so-called critical need assistance as of Wednesday afternoon, according to Jeremy M. Edwards, press secretary for FEMA.

Longer-term aid that could amount to thousands or tens of thousands of dollars will likely come with documentation requirements. Besides the hotel and motel programs and rental assistance, FEMA is offering

Hawaii fire survivors home repair and personal property reimbursements and other needs that may not be covered by insurance, Edwards said.

"FEMA is committed to ensuring all disaster survivors receive every dollar of disaster assistance for which they are legally eligible," he said. Karen Clark & Company, a prominent disaster and risk modeling company, estimates that more than 2,200 buildings were damaged or destroyed by fire with a total of more than 3,000 buildings dam-

aged by fire or smoke or both. The risk firm calculates that the fire in Lahaina caused about \$3.2 billion in insured property losses.

The Small Business Administration, an independent agency of the U.S. government that provides support to entrepreneurs and small businesses, is urging businesses and non-profits affected by the wildfires in Maui to apply for low-interest federal disaster loans. Businesses of all sizes and private nonprofit organizations in that region can borrow up to \$2 million to re-

pair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory and other business assets.

The loans can also be used to make improvements to prevent future disaster damage.

"We're committed to providing federal disaster loans swiftly and efficiently, with a customer-centric approach to help businesses and communities recover and rebuild," said SBA administrator Isabella Casillas Guzman. In addition, disaster loans up to \$500,000 are available to homeowners to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate. And homeowners and renters are eligible for up to \$100,000 to repair or replace damaged or destroyed personal property, including personal vehicles. Interest rates can be as low as 4% for businesses, 2.375% for private nonprofit organizations and 2.5% for homeowners and renters with terms up to 30 years.

To apply for the aid or small-business loans, businesses and individuals can contact the Federal Emergency Management Agency at <https://www.disasterassistance.gov/> □

**Associated Press**

# Biden administration sharply expands temporary status for Ukrainians already in U.S.

By **ELLIOT SPAGAT**

**Associated Press**

**SAN DIEGO (AP)** — The Biden administration on Friday announced a major expansion of temporary legal status for Ukrainians already living in the United States, granting a reprieve for those who fled Russia's invasion.

The move is expected to make 166,700 Ukrainians eligible for Temporary Protected Status, up from about 26,000 currently, the Homeland Security Department said. To qualify, Ukrainians must have been in the United States by Aug. 16, two days before the announcement. They are eligible for work authorization.

The temporary status was originally scheduled to expire on Oct. 19, 2023 but is being extended 18 months to April 19, 2025.

"Russia's ongoing military invasion of Ukraine and the resulting humanitarian crisis requires that the United States continue to offer safety and protection to Ukrainians who may not be able to return to their country," said Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas.

Also Friday, Homeland Security expanded Temporary Protected Status for Sudanese who were in the United States by Aug. 16, saying violent clashes in April have fueled instability.

It estimated an additional 2,750 Sudanese would be eligible, bringing the total to 3,950. The new expiration date of April 19, 2025 marks the 16th extension since temporary status was first granted to Sudanese in 1997.

"Since the military takeover of its government and the recent violent clashes, Sudan has experienced political instability and ongoing conflict that has resulted in a humanitarian crisis," Mayorkas said.

The expansions come as the administration extends Temporary Protected Status to people from a growing number of countries, including Cameroon, Haiti

and Venezuela, as part of a carrot-and-stick approach to immigration that combines more legal entries on

humanitarian grounds with more punitive measures against anyone who enters the country illegally. □



**Ukrainian refugees speak with a United States Customs and Border Patrol official as they prepare to cross the border, Monday, April 4, 2022, in Tijuana, Mexico.**

**Associated Press**



# San Francisco launches driverless bus service following robotaxi expansion

By TERRY CHEA  
Associated Press

**SAN FRANCISCO (AP)** —

First came the robotaxis. Then the driverless buses arrived. San Francisco has launched an autonomous shuttle service less than a week after California regulators approved the expansion of robotaxis despite traffic and safety concerns. The free shuttle will run daily in a fixed route called the Loop around Treasure Island, the site of a former U.S. Navy base in the middle of San Francisco Bay. The Loop makes seven stops, connecting residential neighborhoods with stores and community centers. About 2,000 people live on the island.

The all-electric vehicle, which doesn't have a driver's seat or steering wheel, is staffed with an attendant who can drive the bus with a handheld controller if necessary. The county is offering the shuttle service as part of a grant-funded pilot program to assess how autonomous vehicles can supplement the public



A driverless shuttle stops for a passenger on San Francisco's Treasure Island as part of a pilot program to assess the safety and effectiveness of autonomous vehicles for public transit on Aug. 16, 2023.

transit system. "Having the attendant on board makes everyone feel comfortable," said Tilly Chang, executive director of the San Francisco County Transportation Authority. "This is just a demonstration for now to see, what does it look like

and how does it work to have a driverless shuttle in a low-volume, low-speed environment?"

San Francisco is one of a growing number of cities worldwide that are testing the safety and potential of self-driving vehicles

to transform public transportation. The shuttles are operated by Beep, an Orlando, Florida-based company that has run similar pilot programs in more than a dozen U.S. communities, including service at the Miami Zoo, Mayo Clinic and

Associated Press

Yellowstone National Park. "These shuttles are built for first-mile, last-mile, short connectivity routes. They're not intended to take the place of a bus system," said Beep project manager Shelley Caran. "The autonomous vehicle will have a better reaction time than a human and it will offer a more reliable service because they won't be distracted."

During a test ride Wednesday, the shuttle drove slowly and cautiously in autonomous mode. An attendant manually steered the vehicle around a utility truck that blocked part of the road. "I didn't feel unsafe," said Dominic Lucchesi, an Oakland resident who was among the first to ride the autonomous shuttle. "I thought that it made some abrupt stops, but otherwise I felt like I was riding any other bus for the most part." The boxy shuttle, which can sit up to 10 passengers, will operate 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day and circle the Loop every 20 minutes. □

# Ex-wife charged in ambush-style killing of Microsoft executive Jared Bridegan

**JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (AP)** —

The ex-wife of a Microsoft executive who was gunned down by a triggerman in front of his young daughter has been charged with first-degree murder, and prosecutors in Florida plan to seek the death penalty. A grand jury indicted Shanna Lee Gardner in the ambush-style death of Jared Bridegan, State Attorney Melissa Nelson announced Thursday at a news conference in Jacksonville, Florida. Gardner, 36, was arrested in West Richland, Washington, and will be extradited to Florida to stand trial, Nelson said.

"From very, very early on, everything in my body and soul told me she was behind it," Kristen Bridegan, Jared Bridegan's wife, said during the news conference.

Hank Coxe, who represents Gardner, said via email that he does not comment on pending cases.



Shanna Gardner, the ex-wife of Jared Bridegan, is photographed at a friend's home Wednesday, June 29, 2022 in Jacksonville, Fla.

Associated Press

The state is also seeking the death penalty against Gardner's husband, Mario Fernandez Saldana, who was arrested in March and charged in Bridegan's death.

His attorney, Jesse Dreicer, said in an email that his client has pleaded not guilty and is presumed innocent. "We are dedicated to his defense and are optimistic that when the all of the facts are made available our client will be exonerated," he wrote.

He was arrested after triggerman Henry Arthur Tenon, 62, pleaded guilty to second-degree murder, court records show. He agreed to testify against Fernandez Saldana and Gardner, Nelson said.

Nelson did not say what led to Gardner's arrest or men-

tion a motive.

"Henry Tenon did not act alone. Mario Fernandez did not plan alone. And Shanna Gardner's indictment acknowledges her central and key role in the cold, calculated and premeditated murder of Jared Bridegan," Nelson said.

Bridegan, a father of four and a software developer for Microsoft, was ambushed on Feb. 16, 2022, as he was leaving a Jacksonville Beach neighborhood after dropping off twin children he shared with Gardner and returning to his home in nearby St. Augustine.

Police said that there was a fire in the dimly lit street and that Bridegan presumably opened his car door to move the fire. That's when he was shot multiple times

as his 2-year-old daughter sat in her car seat.

She was found unharmed in the car.

Gardner married Fernandez Saldana in 2018 and moved to Washington following media coverage of the case, officials said.

After the killing, she told news outlets, including the Florida Times-Union and FirstCoast News, that she wasn't involved in Bridegan's death.

A warrant for Gardner's arrest said an investigation into Bridegan's background revealed the couple had a "highly acrimonious divorce" and a "contentious relationship" with both Gardner and Fernandez Saldana.

Gardner's parents, Shelli and Sterling Gardner, issued a statement. □



# A neonatal nurse in a British hospital has been found guilty of killing 7 babies

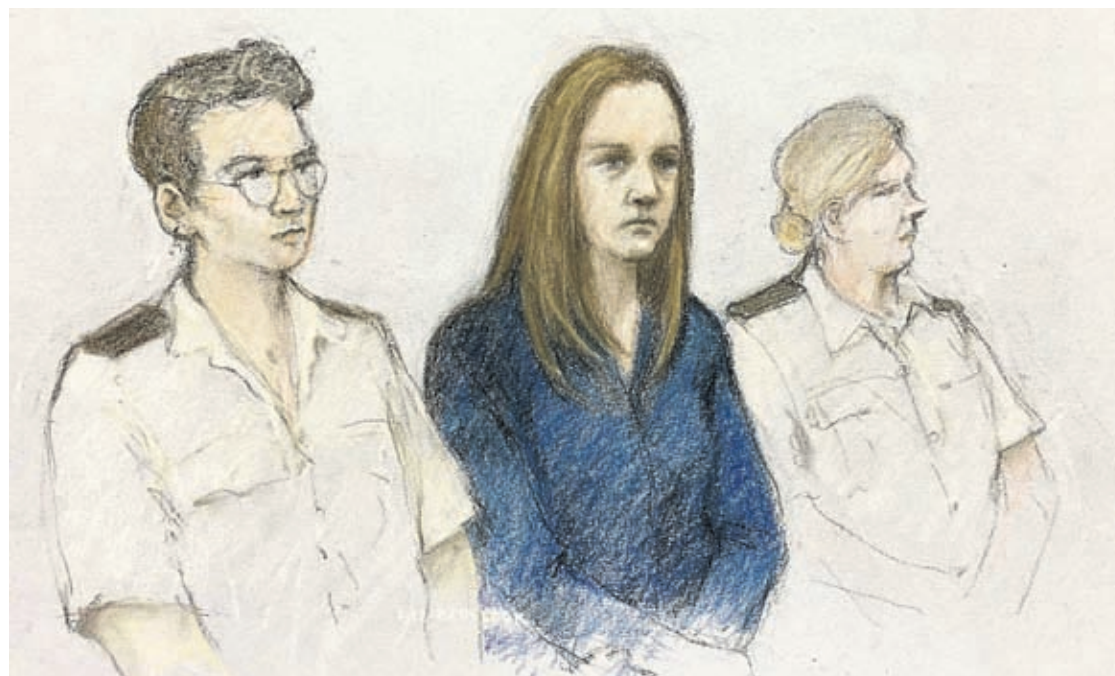
By PAN PYLAS and BRIAN MELLEY

Associated Press

**LONDON (AP)** — A neonatal nurse in a British hospital was found guilty Friday of murdering seven babies and trying to kill six others during a yearlong campaign of deception that saw her prey on the vulnerabilities of sick newborns and their anxious parents. Following 22 days of deliberation, the jury at Manchester Crown Court convicted 33-year-old Lucy Letby of killing the babies, including two triplet boys, in the neonatal unit at the Countess of Chester Hospital in northwest England between June 2015 and June 2016. She will be sentenced on Monday.

"Parents were exposed to her morbid curiosity and her fake compassion," said senior prosecutor Pascale Jones. "Too many of them returned home to empty baby rooms. Many surviving children live with permanent consequences of her assaults upon their lives." Her attacks, Jones said, were "a complete betrayal of the trust placed in her." Families of the victims said they will "forever be grateful" to jurors who since last October had to sit through 145 days of "grueling" evidence.

In a joint statement read outside court, they also expressed their gratitude to all those who came to give



This court artist drawing by Elizabeth Cook from Aug. 10, 2023 shows of nurse Lucy Letby at Manchester Crown Court in Manchester, England.

evidence during the trial, which they described as "extremely harrowing and distressing" to listen to.

"To lose a baby is a heart-breaking experience that no parent should ever have to go through, but to lose a baby or to have a baby harmed in these particular circumstances is unimaginable," they said.

Letby's motives remain unclear, but the scale of her crimes points to intricate planning.

She was accused of deliberately harming the babies in various ways, including by injecting air into their bloodstreams and administering air or milk into their stomachs via nasogastric tubes. She was also ac-

cused of poisoning infants by adding insulin to intravenous feeds and interfering with breathing tubes.

The British government launched an independent inquiry soon after the verdicts that will look into the wider circumstances around what happened at the hospital, including the handling of concerns raised by staff.

"This inquiry will seek to ensure the parents and families impacted get the answers they need," Health Secretary Steve Barclay said. "I am determined their voices are heard, and they are involved in shaping the scope of the inquiry should they wish to do so."

One of the senior doctors

at the Countess of Chester Hospital told the BBC he had repeatedly tried to raise the alarm about Letby but hospital executives failed to investigate the allegations.

Dr Stephen Brearley, the lead doctor in the neonatal unit, said the hospital tried to silence doctors who complained about Letby and delayed calling the police.

The jury of seven women and four men deliberated for 22 days before reaching the verdict. One juror was excused well into deliberations for personal reasons, and the judge later gave the remaining 11 jurors the option of reaching a verdict with 10 people

in agreement instead of a unanimous decision.

Letby was found guilty of the seven murders and of seven charges of attempted murder relating to six children. She was cleared of two charges of attempted murder and the jury could not reach a verdict on several others.

Some of the verdicts were announced in court earlier in the month, but the judge imposed a ban on reporting them until deliberations were complete.

During the lengthy trial, prosecutors said the hospital in 2015 started to experience a significant rise in the number of babies who were dying or suffering sudden deteriorations in their health for no apparent reason. Some suffered "serious catastrophic collapses" but survived after help from medical staff.

Letby was on duty in all the cases with prosecutors describing her as a "constant malevolent presence" in the neonatal unit when the children collapsed or died. They said the nurse harmed the babies in ways that did not leave much of a trace, and that she persuaded her colleagues that the collapses and deaths were normal.

Police launched an investigation into the baby deaths at the hospital in May 2017 and Letby was eventually charged in November 2020. □

Associated Press

## Italian police arrest Dutch man, 21, over the stabbing deaths of his father and a family friend

**MILAN (AP)** — Italian police on Friday arrested a 21-year-old Dutch man suspected in the stabbing death of his father and a family friend in the countryside near the French border.

An official from the Carabinieri paramilitary police confirmed the arrest. Italian media said the suspect was found hiding in the woods near where the attack occurred in the Cuneo province of Piedmont. He has been transported to the city of Cuneo aboard an ambulance.

According to Italian news reports, the 21-year-old suspect is believed to suffer from psychiatric problems.

The family friend, who was also Dutch, was reportedly hosting the father and son for a visit at his home when the attack occurred.

The motive for the stabbings wasn't immediately clear. □



Colonel Giuseppe Carubia speaks during a Carabinieri Press conference following the capture of Sacha Chang after a double stabbing in Cuneo, Italy, Friday, Aug. 18, 2023.

Associated Press



## Turkish Cypriots attack U.N. peacekeepers trying to halt road work inside divided Cyprus' buffer zone

By **MENELAOS HADJICOSTIS**  
Associated Press

**NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP)** — Angry Turkish Cypriots punched and kicked a group of international peacekeepers who obstructed crews working on a road that would encroach on a U.N.-controlled buffer zone in ethnically divided Cyprus, the U.N. said Friday. It said the attack happened as peacekeepers stood in the way of work crews building a road to connect the village of Arsos, in the breakaway Turkish Cypriot north, with the mixed Greek Cypriot-Turkish Cypriot village of Pyla, inside the buffer zone and abutting the Greek Cypriot south, where the island's internationally recognized government is seated.

A video seen by The Associated Press showed scores of Turkish Cypriots accosting a much smaller group of Slovak and British U.N. soldiers trying to hold them back from starting work inside the buffer zone. Some peacekeepers suffered blows to the face as they linked arms to push back the advancing Turkish Cypriots.

The U.N. said three soldiers had to be treated for minor



A woman walks by a UN sign at the UN buffer zone inside Pyla village, outskirts of coastal city of Larnaca, Cyprus, Thursday, Jan. 8, 2009.

injuries. The violence constitutes a serious escalation of tensions not seen on the island in years.

The road would give Turkish Cypriots direct access to Pyla by circumventing a checkpoint on the northern fringe of a British military base, one of two bases that the U.K. retained after Cyprus gained independence from British colonial rule in 1960.

Greek Cypriots perceive the road construction as a move with a military purpose at a sensitive spot along the buffer zone that spans 180 kilometers (120 miles). "Threats to the safety of U.N. peacekeepers and damage to U.N. property are unacceptable and constitute a serious crime under international law which will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law,"

the peacekeeping force, known as UNFICYP, said in a statement.

UNFICYP spokesman Aleem Siddique told The Associated Press that the U.N. wouldn't back down from continuing to "block or frustrate construction of the road by nonviolent means," despite Friday's assault. He said construction of the road would violate the forces' mandate of

maintaining the status quo inside the buffer zone.

Turkish Cypriot authorities blamed U.N. peacekeepers for the altercation, calling their actions "unacceptable" and dismissing the UNFICYP statement as "unfounded allegations."

They accused UNFICYP of being "biased" toward the Turkish Cypriot side and said the force should "immediately cease" its efforts to physically obstruct construction of a "humanitarian" project.

The embassies of the U.K., France and the United Nations issued a joint statement expressing "serious concern" over construction of the road, calling for an immediate halt to the work and condemning the assaults as "completely unacceptable".

Maintaining the status quo of the buffer zone is enshrined in the U.N. mission's mandate since 1974, when Turkey invaded in the wake of a coup mounted by Greek junta-backed supporters of union with Greece. Only Turkey, which maintains more than 35,000 troops in the island's northern third, recognizes a Turkish Cypriot declaration of independence. □

Associated Press

## A woman interrupts a Quran-burning protest in Sweden by spraying activist with a fire extinguisher

**STOCKHOLM (AP)** — Swedish police detained a woman Friday who sprayed an

anti-Islam activist with a fire extinguisher as he staged a Quran-burning protest out-



A counter-demonstrator extinguishes a Quran on fire outside the Iranian embassy, in Stockholm, Friday, Aug. 18, 2023.

Associated Press

side the Iranian Embassy in Stockholm.

Video of the scene showed the woman rushing up to Salwan Momika and spraying white powder toward him before she was intercepted by plainclothes police officers who led her away. Momika, who appeared stunned but unhurt, then resumed his demonstration, which had been authorized by police.

Police spokeswoman Towe Hägg said the woman, who was not identified by police, was detained on suspicion of disturbing public order and violence against a police officer.

Momika, a refugee from

Iraq, has desecrated the Quran in a series of anti-Islam protests that have caused anger in many Muslim countries. Swedish police have allowed his demonstrations, citing freedom of speech while filing preliminary hate speech charges against him. Prosecutors are investigating whether his actions are permissible under Sweden's hate speech law, which prohibits incitement of hatred against groups or individuals based on race, religion or sexual orientation. Momika says his protests target the religion of Islam, not Muslim people. The Quran-burnings have

sparked angry protests in Muslim countries, attacks on Swedish diplomatic missions and threats from Islamic extremists.

Sweden on Thursday raised its terror alert to the second-highest level, saying the country had become a priority target for terrorist groups.

Momika said he would continue to burn the Quran despite the threats directed at him and Sweden, saying he wants to protect Sweden's population from the messages of the Quran.

"I have freedom of speech," Swedish news agency TT quoted him as saying. □



## Visit the island's hidden natural pools



**(Oranjestad)—Amongst the countless beaches surrounding the island that are well-known and frequently visited, there are an additional two “hidden” natural pools that are situated in the northern coast of the island, two ideal stops in your tour itinerary.**

### Conchi (Natural Pool)

For many years, Conchi was the only natural pool that we had on the island. Located in the Arikok Na-

tional Park, near Boca Keto and the Daimari Ranch, Conchi—also known “Cura di Turtuga (Turtle’s Cove) or just Natural Pool—is reachable with any 4x4 vehicle or by foot if you’re up for a long hike. However, since it is part of the National Park, you must first get permission from park management to enter. You would have to purchase a day pass, and receive a wristband as proof of payment. Once you’ve completed that,

you are set!

If you decide to hike from the entrance of the Arikok National Park, this is also possible: do bring plenty of protective clothing and enough water and food—it could take you up to three hours to hike there!

However, when you eventually do get there, you will be greeted with crystal blue water surrounded by a natural rock formation that protects you from the wild waves on the other side. Though the pool is located on the northern side of the island (where the sea is largely rough and largely no suitable for swimming), the pool itself is very calm. It’s also relatively deep, and you can climb up the rocks and jump in!

### Cave Pool

This relatively new pool appeared just a few years ago, when a part of the dried up coral floor broke



off and created a partition between the ocean and what is now the natural pool that is hidden there. Because it’s still so new, there is no official name for it, but most people just call it the cave pool.

Just like the Conchi, the new natural pool is situated on the northern coast of Aruba. However, this pool is much easier to reach with any type of vehicle, and there is no hiking needed. This spot has also become a regular stop for touring visitors.

When you get there, maybe you won’t be able to spot the pool immediately,

because you will probably notice the moon-shaped lagoon where wild northern waves crash into each other. Sounds scary, but if you look down on your right, you’ll see a calm, crystal blue little pool in the corner. To get there, you have to climb down some stairs. Be careful when climbing down and follow the instructions of your tour guide if you have one.

And just like Conchi, this pool also has a jumping spot, and a rope to climb back up the boulder. □

**Picture of cave pool is credited to RockaBeach Tours**

## Visit the natural bridges of Aruba!

**(Oranjestad)—After you’ve visited the Alto Vista Church, the Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins and the mini natural pool that is located right next to it, you’re next up around the northern coast line must be the Natural Bridge. Once the largest natural bridge in the Caribbean, this bridge has been a tourist attraction for many years.**

The bridge was formed during thousands of years, cut and crafted by the wild waves that crash into the coral stone walls of the coast. Before its collapse, this bridge measured 30 meters in length and 7 meters in height, making it the biggest natural bridge in the Caribbean at the time. For many years, this site was

also a frequently visited beach, as the bridge had a small opening through which the water would flow into the tiny beach.

Unfortunately in 2005, the bridge collapsed, and the little beach dried up. Despite this, this site remained a tourist attraction, with many visitors walking along the coral cliffs of the bridge



**The Natural Bridge pre-collapse**

to see the spectacular view of the northern coastline and the Caribbean Sea. Visitors can also still visit the souvenir shop on the left of the bridge entrance.

While the natural bridge no longer is functional, there is now a smaller natural bridge very close. This bridge is often called the “Baby Bridge” or “Daughter Bridge”. □



**The Baby Natural Bridge**



**Current state of the Natural Bridge**



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## Get it ALL done at Do It Center and Super Do It Center & Groceries



**Noord – Sometimes all we need is one place where we can do all our shopping at once. Well, Do it center and Super Do it Center Groceries has it all. This is the largest, local owned Do it Center in the Caribbean and best of all a 100% locally owned family business.**

### How it all began

It was 1938 when Mr. Eric Ponson started his journey at General Store. Ponson did not hesitate and decided to buy General Store. Buying a store and thus going from employee to owner of a business with a debt of 11.000 guilders was not an easy task.

As the saying goes: "Behind every successful man, is a strong

woman". In the case of Ponson, this was no different. As General Store progressed and slowly became successful, Mrs. Irene Ponson, came in to assist her husband. Irene Ponson is a visionary, she knew exactly where and how to invest and within a short amount of time in 1970, General Store moved to a better location at the Steenweg. This allowed for a lot more merchandise, products and employees. Supply and demand was as such, that General Store became the number 1 electrical business. Business kept going so well that the location at the Steenweg became too small and was moved later to Dakota Shopping Paradise and later to Pedro Gallego Straat. With this move, an expansion was decided upon and an electronics

store in Savaneta was opened. General Store still being very successful was ready for more growth.

Ricky, Kenneth, Corine and Frans are the fruits of this marriage. Kenneth and Frans however, decided to further develop their father's legacy and continued with their mother's dream to expand the business. An expansion not in square feet only, but in merchandise as well. A great opportunity presented itself when the Ponson family was able to buy a piece of property across from the airport. In 2007 the Ponson family moved into their brand new and huge building

After a successful opening and expansion, Kenneth and Frans who inherited their mother's vision, decided that General Store was ready for yet another expansion. With the support of Mr. Tom Barfell and management of Do it Best in the States, the construction of Do it Center commenced.

Fast forward to today. A Do it Center in Aruba, with more than 50.000 top of the line items for interior as well exterior use, building materials, STO products and a top of the line grocery store. Perseverance, responsibility, vision and the courage to invest have made Ponson's General Store as successful as it is today.

### Super Do It Center Shaba & Groceries

Located in Shaba, Noord. This is the last sibling of the Do It Center family. Here you will be able to find anything you are looking for. The building is divided into several departments from home to hardware to groceries. Everything under one roof.

Groceries? Visit the fully stocked supermarket with fresh fruits and vegetables and high class meat selections. Highly known products and brands are here for you to grab. Every week Do It Center Groceries offers its weekly special on selected items. Weekly specials are very popular and a perfect chance for you to buy your favorite products at a reduced price.

### Need a home makeover?

Do not skip the furniture department "Leenbakker". Here, you will find a divine collection of European furniture, worldwide known for their modern and stylish features for your bedroom, bathroom, living room or kitchen. For your garden they have a wide selection of durable furniture specially made for our tropical climate. Take a walk around and find some treasures. Find the perfect accessory for your house, fitted for your personality and style. Modern, elegant, retro industrial, whatever your style is you will definitely find something for your personal taste.

Do it Center Shaba is open from Monday to Saturday from 8AM to 8PM and on Sunday's from 9AM to 6PM.

For more information go to [www.doit.aw](http://www.doit.aw).





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CASINO AND SHOPS

Open daily 10am to 3am | J.E. Irausquin Blvd #47 | 583.5000 | casinoalhambra.com

Play Responsibly. Visit [www.gamblersanonymous.org](http://www.gamblersanonymous.org) if you or someone you know has a gambling problem.

## Aruba Tourism Authority honor loyal visitors on the island

Recently, Ms. Marouska Heyliger had the great pleasure to honor a loyal and friendly visitors of Aruba as Goodwill Ambassadors at their home away from home.

The honorees are:

**Richard and Janet Balentine from Pennsylvania**

The symbolic honorary title is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, as a token of appreciation to the guests who visit Aruba between 10-20-35 and more consecutive years.

Ms. Marouska Heyliger thanked them for choosing Aruba as their vacation destination and as their home away from home for so many years together with the members of Marriott Surf club.

Top reason for returning provided by the honorees were: Weather, friendly people, safety of the island and great restaurants.

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees for always having Aruba dear to their hearts. □



## National Park Arikok: Aruba's biggest nature conservation

**The National Park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There are numerous animals to discover, for example the sea turtle who lays his eggs on the park's beaches.**

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the islands past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of educational and informative programs and fun activities is available.

Did you know that four of the in total seven species of sea turtle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches? In

the national park, a Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*) keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place below on the beach: a majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heads back to sea after laying her eggs, while another nest laid 2 months ago by the same female hatches—a very rare occurrence of daytime nesting and hatching. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

**Nature Conservation**

The protected area of National Park Arikok was officially established in 2000. Arikok National Park is a 34 square kilometers (7907 acres) of natural area, located at the north-eastern part of Aruba which contains examples of most



of the island's flora and fauna against a backdrop of great geological complexity. We are proud to state that approximately 18% of the total land area of Aruba is assigned as a National Park, to protect and preserve the flora, fauna, geology and historical remains present within

Arikok National Park.

**The Landscape**

There is a great geological variety within the park. The main aspects are the rough hills of the volcanic Aruba lava formation, the mysterious rocks of the batholithic quartz-diorite/tonalite, and the limestone

rocks from fossilized coral. The two tallest hills on the island are situated within the park. Jamanota hill 188 meters (617 ft) and Arikok hill 176 meters (577 ft), from which the name of the park is derived.

The line of the permanently wind-and-wave beaten North Coast is broken by several bays (boca's). Most of them are small yet impressive inlets at the mouth of dry riverbeds. Some of these bays (boca's) are spectacular sights, adorned with white, sandy beaches and sand dunes, as is the case at Boca Prins and Dos Playa.

Arikok is also home to Conchi, Aruba's most important natural attraction; also known as The Natural Pool. The journey to the Pool is an adventure by itself and only possible by foot, horse, ATV or 4x4 vehicle. □



## Four local museums receive contribution from ATA as support for local history and culture

**"Today is a truly remarkable day," according to Ronella Croes, director of Aruba's Tourism Office (ATA), during the celebration that took place in Fort Zoutman this week.**

As a strategic partner, ATA is extremely proud to announce the reopening of the four museums that fall under the management of the Aruban Museum Foundation (Fundacion Museo Arubano.) These are the Historical Museum of Aruba, Industry Museum, Community Museum, and Carnival Euphoria. The reopening of these museums provide an opportunity for the locals and visitors to explore and appreciate our history and cultural heritage more closely.

In the past, ATA would proudly give a contribution to our museums that are operated by FMA. A new agreement between ATA and FMA is tied in the efforts to preserve and promote the history and culture of Aruba – one of the key aspects on which ATA focuses. As part of the new agreement, ATA not only will make sure that the museums are open, but will also work closely with FMA to guarantee the necessary promotion to attract visitors for our museums.

During her speech, the director of ATA elaborated on the importance of good collaboration between partners: "The following years it will be essential to restructure and position our existing museums to reach a sustainable plan. For this reason, it is of utmost importance for ATA, as a strategic partner, together with his Excellencies the minister of



Tourism, Dangui Oduber, minister of Culture, Xiomara Maduro, and FMA has announced the reopening of these four museums. As a commitment to promote and advance our culture, ATA continues highlighting these four museums as a crucial aspect for our community and our tourism."

Our museums, which are a reflection of our identity, give us an opportunity to know our past and appreciate our heritage. Simply put, museums help with education, inspiration and connection between communities.

Aside from the museums, ATA is

proud to carry, among others, the Aruba Art Fair, which will be celebrating its sixth edition in September. ATA is also happy to contribute to the Dia di Bazi, Bon Bini Festival, Carnival and other national celebrations, which include the Dande Festival and the Flag and Anthem. All these are concrete examples of ATA's commitment to contribute to valuable cultural experiences, both for the people of Aruba as well as all those who visit our island.

The minister of Culture, Xiomara Maduro gave a speech during which she thanked her colleague minister of Tourism, ATA, Aruba Ports Authority and FMA for their

collaboration and efforts to make the reopening of the four museums possible.

Aruba's museums went through difficulty just like other museums all around the world during the Covid pandemic. Tourism was down and together with it, the funds that ATA and APA provided for FMA, which brought the operation of the museums in danger. This caused the museums to have to close their doors and send employees home, which was very painful. In the end, FMA remained with only one worker who was helped with funds from Mondriaanfonds.

Meanwhile the ministry of Culture made sure that the collections were properly cared for and conserved, but the funds were not sufficient to cover the operation of the four museums. However, together with funds from the Tourism Product Enhancement Fund TPEF, it was possible to fix Fort Zoutman and open this in collaboration with ATA to organize the much loved Bon Bini Festival.

The Museum of Industry also can count with the cooperation of Utilities and the Community Museum with the good cooperation of Monumentenfonds. The minister of Culture thanked all organizations and people involved for their commitment which now results in the reopening of the four museums under the management of FMA. □





## Lessons from our elders: Plants and fruits for medicinal use



**(Oranjestad)**—Though western medicine is now widely used for common illnesses and to keep our bodies healthy and happy, it is still very common in every household in Aruba (and around the world) to have staple home remedies that is passed on through generations. Here are some tips that our elders have passed on to us over the years.

### Pineapple

Pineapple has more uses than topping it on your Christmas ham. According to elders, the skin of a pineapple is great to use to refresh your body. Clean the skin thoroughly and make tea or warapa\* with it. It is

said that this tea can also be drank after an operation on the ovaries or uterus. This gets rid of irritation and inflammation.

When the fruit is unripe and green, this can be used to stimulate menstruation flow in women. This also stimulates the passing kidney stones. When ripe, the fruit can be used for poisoning in the gut and can help treat rheumatic diseases, like arthritis.

However, breastfeeding women who cannot produce much milk are advised not to consume too pineapple, and people with acid reflux are recommended to not consume

any pineapple at all.

### Arrowroot

Arrowroot is native to tropical America and can be sold as a powder or whole. It is said that you can take arrowroot powder and make a “shalup” (porridge) for stomach pain or when you’re feeling weak. You can make it with milk too, but it is advised to best use just water. You can also add prunes for a bit of sweetness. Arrowroot shalup is also good to treat an unhealthy gut or for diarrhea.

To make arrowroot shalup, boil a bit of water and add one tablespoon of arrowroot powder and stir continuously until you reach porridge consistency. If you make a shalup with milk, add a pinch of salt. Raw arrowroot powder can be used to powder babies.

### Eggplant/Aubergine

Eggplants, or aubergines, are easy to find in supermarkets around the world and can be grown all year round on the island. Related to potato and tomato, eggplants are good to



calm nerves. It can also be used to lower blood pressure, by steeping its leaves in boiled water and drinking it. You can also make eggplant juice to help purify your blood. However, do make sure to drink slowly; let it mix with your spit and then swallow.

Eggplant kataplan\* can also be used to treat skin

tumors, abscesses and hemorrhoids. Eggplant kataplan can also be used externally to treat arthritis. □

\*warapa: term referring to a water and sugar solution, a.k.a simple syrup.

\*kataplan: porridge-like mixture used externally for wounds or parts of the body that are painful or swollen.

## Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

**(Oranjestad)**—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic—but important—information that we think may come in handy to Aruba’s visitors.

### Emergency services

Even though most people don’t even want to think about having to contact emergency services—especially not while on their vacation, it is still important to know what number to dial in case of the unlikely event of an accident or severe incident.

Police: 100  
Police Tipline: 11141  
Ambulance: 911  
Fire Dept: 115  
Oranjestad: HOH hospital: +297-527-4000  
San Nicolas: ImSan: +297-527-8833

### Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

### Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba’s drinking water exceeds WHO’s international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

### Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though,

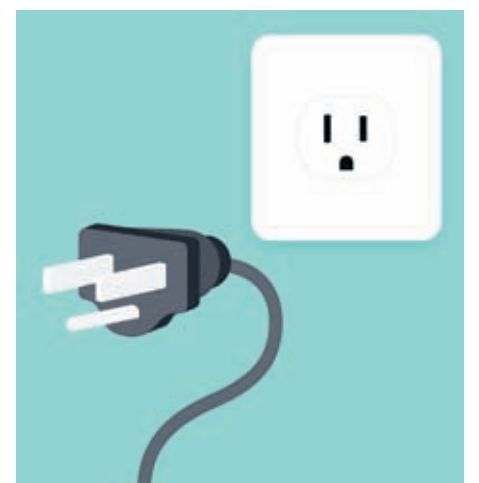
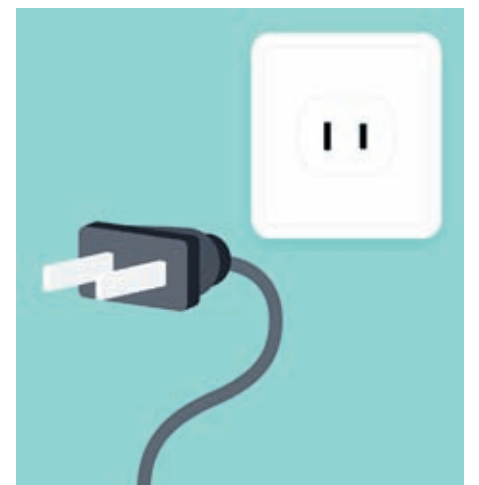
most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

### Taxis

Prices for taxi fair are set by the Department of Public Traffic and are based on destination rather than mileage. Most taxis can take up to five passengers, but this may vary depending on the vehicle. Taxis are pretty much always available and you can ever hire one for \$45 an hour.

### Safety

Aruba is one of the safest islands in the Caribbean, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe. □





# CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 40 Like Loki

1 Grassy 41 Some  
expanse coasters

6 Repair bill 42 Miser's  
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11 Directional  
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12 Wed in 1 African  
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13 Alpine 2 Gains by  
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19 Rx 7 Totality  
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22 Cart puller 8 Grocery  
23 Un- store  
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24 Short  
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25 Take part

27 Shop tool

30 Ran

31 Greek  
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32 Play  
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33 Drool

35 Use the  
rink

38 Clarifying  
words

39 Spanish  
snacks

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Yesterday's answer

9 First 26 Recorded  
game

10 Tears 27 Stringent

16 Canadian 28 Not  
nervous

20 Taking in 29 Cautioned

21 Crunch 30 Ship staffs

24 Hamm of 34 Love,  
soccer Latin-style

25 Wolf's 36 Young  
cousin fellow

37 Snaky  
shape

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39						40			
41						42			

8-19

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three U's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

8-19 CRYPTOQUOTE

XEV GLY OEVQ AICDIH MGI

GQILA EY QIPVCLQ MGI

GQILA MD'Z CMTI L ZLVGI!

— GJQMZ OQLDD

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: TEACHERS OPEN THE DOOR, BUT YOU MUST ENTER BY YOURSELF. — CHINESE PROVERB

## DonorsChoose sees banner donation year with help from Gates Foundation and millions of small gifts



Bill Gates speaks during the Global Fund's Seventh Replenishment Conference, Wednesday, Sept. 21, 2022, in New York.

Associated Press

By GLENN GAMBOA

AP Business Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Kerry Richardson likes that some of her fellow teachers at Richmond Public Schools in Virginia nicknamed her "Walmart." Others call the second grade teacher "Boy Scout."

Yes, Richardson says with a laugh, she is always prepared to lend fellow teachers whatever they may need. She says that's only possible because of supplies she gets from DonorsChoose, the online platform that connects teachers seeking materials for their students and classrooms with contributors looking to support their efforts.

And Richardson is not alone.

DonorsChoose has seen a banner year for donations in 2023, setting records by collecting nearly \$10 million during Teacher Appreciation Week in May. Earlier this month, the Bill & Melin-

da Gates Foundation donated \$2 million to match 50% of all DonorsChoose pledges for one day a marked departure from the way the largest U.S. philanthropy normally makes donations, based on its own meticulous research and big-picture priorities.

DonorsChoose is also seeing plenty of engagement from donors in a time when overall giving is generally down, especially among young people.

Alix Guerrier, DonorsChoose CEO, says families with school-age children use the platform to teach their kids about generosity because the kids understand what getting sports equipment or school supplies means to students who don't have any. He said the platform's appeal to slightly older donors is even stronger.

"Among young adults whether that's Gen Z or maybe even into millennials there is a distrust of

larger institutions and a high premium placed on directness," Guerrier said. "They actually have an interaction with the teacher right through the platform and can give a word of support. The teacher sends their thanks and gives evidence of what happened. So that kind of directness really appeals to them."

The model created in 2000 by Charles Best, who was teaching at a public high school in The Bronx actually appeals to plenty of philanthropists, both big and small.

Teachers go on the platform to ask for supplies that their districts do not provide. When donors fully fund the campaign, DonorsChoose sends the teachers the supplies.

On any given day, philanthropist Craig Newmark, founder of Craigslist, will likely boost a handful of DonorsChoose campaigns from his personal account on the X platform, formerly known as Twitter. Actress and SAG-AFTRA board member Yvette Nicole Brown does the same. As does stand-up comic and talk show host W. Kamau Bell.

"It's one of the best days of the year: @DonorsChoose match day," Bill Gates wrote on X, earlier this month, announcing the Gates Foundation's match. That day, DonorsChoose raised \$8 million between the Gates Foundation match and nearly 40,000 donations for 24,000 teachers.

Bob Hughes, director of K-12 Education for the Gates Foundation's United States Program, said he considered the donation a privilege to help support teachers, especially with the current shortage following the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We're a strategic philanthropy and our goal is to change big levers in the world," said Hughes. □

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# Ro CEO charts growth past sexual health roots to obesity and beyond



AP Illustration/Peter Hamlin

By TOM MURPHY  
AP Health Writer

Ro built its name online by offering discreet help for problems like erectile dysfunction. Now it wants to tackle an issue many people are talking about: obesity. The care provider formerly known as Roman launched its "body program" earlier this year. The subscription service aims to guide customers through weight loss with help from doctors, nurses and the latest obesity treatments. It's a popular topic, with Ro competitor Hims & Hers planning a similar program. Ro also offers subscription services to help people grow longer eyelashes or curb excessive sweating. It also provides skin care, fertility testing and hair-loss treatments, among other

services.

Zach Reitano co-founded the privately held company in 2017. The 32-year-old CEO spoke recently with The Associated Press about how his company has since branched out. The conversation has been edited for clarity and length.

**Q:** Your body program costs \$145 a month after the first month. Why charge monthly fees?

**A:** The fee is everything that patient needs to receive high-quality obesity care. That is one thing desperately missing from health care ... a simple and transparent business model where patients know how much they're going to pay, when they're going to be charged and what services they're going to receive.

**Q:** What are the next care areas primed for Ro's approach?

**A:** (Obesity) is upstream of a lot of other underlying chronic diseases. We might start a relationship with a patient where they want to lose weight. But what we've seen is they also care about the overall improvement in their cardiometabolic health.

**Q:** You're selling treatments for longer eyelashes. How can patients take Ro seriously for medical problems like obesity?

**A:** We don't judge what is most important to a patient. We simply want to be there when that is their concern that day. The same person who might want longer eyelashes, they might also struggle with weight. Once they see us solve one health care goal for them ... that encourages them to start

another.

**Q:** Telemedicine grew popular in the pandemic. Will the enthusiasm last?

**A:** I definitely believe so. People should not view telemedicine as a replacement, but rather a complement, to in-person care. It is one tool that can be used to increase access, reduce costs and increase convenience. □



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2 Bed Ocean view \$22,500  
2 Bed Garden view \$16,000  
3 Bed Ocean view \$29,000  
WK 51 Ocean view \$60,000  
WK 52 Ocean View \$60,000  
WK 7 and 14 - all views

## GOLD SEASON

2 Bed Oceanfront \$17,500  
2 Bed Oceanside \$14,500  
2 Bed Ocean view \$12,000  
2 Bed Garden view \$10,000  
3 Bed Ocean view \$20,500

## Marriott Aruba Ocean Club PLATINUM SEASON

2 Bed Oceanfront \$36,000  
2 Bed Ocean view \$24,000  
1 Bed Ocean front \$17,000  
1 Bed Ocean View \$14,500

## GOLD SEASON

2 Bed Oceanfront \$19,000  
2 Bed Ocean view \$12,500  
1 Bed oceanfront \$14,000

\*\* Destination Points \$6.00 per point

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## Divi Aruba Phoenix

1 Bed wk 32 \$3,000

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www.facebook.com/groups/MarriottArubaOcean



## HEALTH

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#### Oranjestad

Hospital 7:00 pm / 10:00pm  
Tel. 527 4000

#### San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours  
Tel. 524 8833

### PHARMACY ON DUTY

#### Oranjestad:

Central: Tel. 585 1965  
Aloe : Tel. 584 4606

#### Women in Difficulties

### OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850  
Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002  
Urgent Care 586 0448  
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic  
+297 588 0539

### EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

### TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

### TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

### AID FOUNDATIONS

FAVI- Visually Impaired  
Tel. 582 5051

Alcoholics Anonymous  
Tel. 736 2952

Narcotics Anonymous  
Tel. 583 8989

Fundacion Contra Violencia  
Relacional Tel. 583 5400

Centre for Diabetes  
Tel. 524 8888

Child Abuse Prevention  
Tel. 582 4433

Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

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# Noah Lyles and Fred Kerley set the tone in the race to be the 'Fastest Mouth in the World'

By EDDIE PELLIS

AP National Writer

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP) —

Ever since Usain Bolt exited the men's sprint game, the 100 meters the race for the title of "Fastest Man in the World" has been a snoozy affair filled with men of few words and names from out of nowhere.

Maybe, just maybe, that's about to change, just in time for the run-up to next year's Paris Olympics.

Two of the fastest sprinters in the United States, Noah Lyles and Fred Kerley, brought some smack talk and even a bit of fun back to track, turning a routine news conference Friday in advance of the start of world championships into something a tad better.

The spark was Lyles' recent declaration on social media that he's aiming to run 9.65 seconds in the 100 and 19.10 in the 200, which is his specialty.

Someone asked Kerley, the defending world champion, what he might tell people about himself with the 100 set to kick off Saturday.

"I'm Fred Kerley, this is my



Fred Kerley, of the United States, celebrates after winning the final in the men's 100-meter run at the World Athletics Championships on Saturday, July 16, 2022, in Eugene, Ore.

Associated Press

title," he said. "If Noah's going to run 9.65, then I'm running faster."

To which Lyles, sitting on the opposite end of the table, shot back: "That's what they all say 'til they get beat."

Even if the whole thing was pre-planned there was no real sign that it was it

was as much life as this race has seen since Bolt, who set records, won nine Olympic gold medals and, even at that, saved his best entertainment for after the races, left the sport in 2017. Speaking of Bolt, if Lyles meets his goals, the 9.65 would be the third fastest time ever in the 100 a time

only the Jamaican has beaten. And 19.10 in the 200 would shatter Bolt's 14-year-old mark by .09. Lyles, who won gold at last year's worlds when he broke Michael Johnson's hallowed American record (19.32) by one-hundredth of a second, said he's not afraid to set the bar high or

low, as the case may be. He explained that some of his training runs have his coach, Lance Brauman, raising his eyebrows. And Brauman, Lyles said, "is a guy who does not get excited at all."

"I don't have a problem saying what my dreams are," Lyles said. "I don't care if people think I can do it or not. I don't even care if I can't do it. But if I don't say it to myself, it's never going to happen."

That the Americans are dreaming big in the sprints is no surprise. Last year, they swept both the 100 and the 200, even with Lyles not entered in the shorter race. Even though he and Kerley were poking each other, they saved their best shade for the defending Olympic champion. Marcell Jacobs of Italy was basically unknown outside his own country before the Tokyo Games and has been basically invisible since because of a series of injuries.

"It was a tough and long year," Jacobs had said a day earlier at a separate media event. □

# Deion Sanders-led Colorado is driving a lot of college football betting

By MARK ANDERSON

AP Sports Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) — The excitement of Deion Sanders

taking over at Colorado is making the Buffaloes an unlikely favorite of bettors for this college football sea-



Colorado head coach Deion Sanders looks on in the first half of the team's spring practice NCAA college football game, April 22, 2023, in Boulder, Colo.

Associated Press

son. At least with what is considered the betting public. For the pros, not so much. Colorado has a win total of 3 1/2 at FanDuel Sportsbook and other books for its final Pac-12 Conference season. The professional gamblers are the reason why that number isn't higher, and they're the ones who carry the most influence when determining lines. "We're seeing a lot of over action from the public," said Chuck Esposito, Red Rock race and sportsbook director in Las Vegas. Sanders overhauled the vast majority of that roster, bringing in 86 new players 56 since Colorado's spring game to revive a once-

proud program that went 1-11 last season.

This isn't the first rebuild for the charismatic Sanders, who calls himself Coach Prime after a Hall of Fame playing career in which he dubbed himself Prime Time. He also led Jackson State to back-to-back Southwestern Athletic Conference championships, a program that went 4-8 as recently as 2019.

"It's quite a phenomenon, the amount of Buffalo bets coming through," said Joey Feazel, who oversees college football betting for Caesars Digital.

"Coach Prime is one of the most entertaining coaches, and it's interesting to see it. I'm really anxious to see

how they start out the year with TCU (on Sept. 2). I think they might surprise a lot of people."

Beyond Colorado, Esposito and Feazel said sixth-ranked USC was another team outside the top four driving a lot of the action. Even those who bet for a living are on the Trojans.

That's a change from last season when Feazel said the Trojans weren't taken seriously by the pros. But now coach Lincoln Riley is in his second season, and reigning Heisman Trophy candidate Caleb Williams is back at quarterback after nearly making the College Football Playoff before pulling his hamstring in the Pac-12 Championship. □



# The NFL's relaxed jersey rules are not for nothing. Meet the players who now wear number 0

By DAVE CAMPBELL  
AP Pro Football Writer

**EAGAN, Minn. (AP)** — Marcus Davenport was on his way to meet his best man for some day-before wedding preparations when he took a call from his new head coach Kevin O'Connell.

The Minnesota Vikings had just drafted Jordan Addison. Call it first-round privilege, but the rookie wide receiver had worn the No. 3 jersey his whole life. That was Davenport's original pick upon signing with Minnesota as a free agent the previous month, but the sixth-year outside linebacker agreed to switch with his mind happily preoccupied with the impending nuptials.

All the numbers in the 90s were claimed, and Davenport was disinterested in negotiating a trade with or putting pressure on a teammate.

He then made the first of many wise decisions as a married man: He listened to his wife.

"She was like, 'Nobody has really ever had zero. Why don't you be different? This is a new chapter, a new you,'" Davenport recalled in an interview after a recent practice with the Vikings. "I like to think of zero as a beginning and an ending, so I was like, 'Let me just take this leap.'"

Davenport became the first player in purple to wear No. 0, of course, because this is the first season the NFL has allowed it.

The unusual number gets regular use in college football and in the NBA, but for an organization once derisively known as the "No Fun League," this latest concession on uniform number rules was met with another warm welcome from the players. Two years ago, the NFL made several major changes including the allowance for every position except offensive linemen and defensive linemen to join the quarterbacks, punters and kickers in the prestigious single digits.

As of this week, 22 of the



**Jacksonville Jaguars wide receiver Calvin Ridley (0) runs drills before an NFL preseason football game against the Dallas Cowboys, Saturday, Aug. 12, 2023, in Arlington, Texas.**

Associated Press

NFL's 32 teams now have a zero hero. Seven are on offense: running backs Nyheim Hines (Bills, injured) and D'Andre Swift (Eagles) and wide receivers Braxton Berrios (Dolphins), Parris Campbell (Giants), Marvin Jones Jr. (Lions), Zach Pascal (Cardinals) and Calvin Ridley (Jaguars).

Including Davenport, there are 15 defensive players donning this smallest of the digits, perhaps a sign of attention-seeking in a sport that yields so much focus on and fame for the skill positions on the other side of the ball. The other edge rushers are Brian Burns (Panthers), Devin Bush (Seahawks), Lorenzo Carter (Falcons), Jonathan Cooper (Broncos), Yaya Diaby (Buccaneers), Roquan Smith (Ravens) and Byron Young (Rams). Rounding out the list are defensive backs Adrian Amos (Jets), Desmond King (Texans), Sean Murphy-Bunting (Titans), Greg Newsome (Browns), Ugo

Umadi (Saints) and Samuel Womack (49ers) and linebacker Daiyan Henley (Chargers).

The only players excluded from wearing No. 0 are offensive linemen, still limited to 50-79, and defensive linemen, still slotted between 50-79 and 90-99.

Bush encountered the same situation as Davenport after the Seahawks drafted a wide receiver in the first round in Jaxon Smith-Njigba who wanted his old No. 11.

"I was like 'All right, it's fine.' You get drafted once, so I gave up the number. I didn't tax him. I didn't charge him. So he's lucky," Bush said. "But they end up having zero open, and I was like, 'Why not?'"

Some of the decisions were more benign. Pascal wanted to stay with a single digit after moving from the Eagles to the Cardinals and discovered zero as his only option.

Jones, who returned to the Lions for the second time

after playing the last two seasons for the Jaguars, picked zero at the urging of his children.

"I just said yes," Jones said. "I couldn't think of anything."

Davenport's wife, Alexandra, was onto something with the new beginning. Murphy-Bunting switched teams, too, from the Buccaneers to the Titans.

"New situation, a new environment, why not start fresh?" said Murphy-Bunting, who would have stayed with the No. 26 he wore with Tampa Bay but found it already taken by teammate Kristian Fulton. Henley, the Chargers rookie, wore No. 10 in high school and No. 11 and No. 1 in college.

"I feel it's an opportunity to be remembered," Henley said. "Obviously to want to be a good player is amazing, but to be the first good player in that number is even better. So I look at it as another opportunity to set the bar."

Carter, who gave his old No. 9 to quarterback Desmond Ridder, found a dial symmetry in the zero with his nickname, "Zo." He wore No. 7 in college at Georgia.

"As a rookie I got stuck with 95 or 59. I took 59," Carter said. "I wasn't a huge number guy, but it was great to get a chance to get back in that single digit."

Ridder took No. 4 as a rookie with the Falcons. Carter denied his request for No. 9 last year.

"But he came out there, and he made some plays, and he earned his job," Carter said.

Ridley, for the record, actually sees himself wearing the letter 'O' not the No. 0. He was one of the first players to announce his decision. His middle name is Orin, hence the inspiration.

"They call me 'Original' where I'm from. I'm original. I'm the first one," said Ridley, who's in his first season with the Jaguars after serving a year-long suspension from the NFL for gambling on games. "I wanted to be the first one to get it for sure."

Davenport considered No. 11, as a representation of the two first-round draft picks the Saints sent to the Packers to move up 13 spots in 2018 and take him out of Texas-San Antonio.

"For a while, I took a lot of that pressure on myself. That probably hindered me," Davenport said.

Now he can look down at his jersey number and feel free and special.

"I think it intrigues more fans," Bush said. "To see a linebacker wearing zero, you're not going to forget it." □




















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